

MENDAKI SYN<>>POSIUM 2024

ASPIRING FUTURES:
BRIDGING DREAMS TO ACTIONS

ORGANISED BY:



IN SUPPORT OF:



PROGRAMME

0900	Breakfast and Registration
1000	Arrival of GOH
1010	Keynote Address by GOH
1020	Session 1: Youth Aspirations
1120	Tea Break
1140	Session 2: Youth Mental Well-Being
1240	Lunch
1400	Fireside Chat: A Conversation with Youth
1500	End of Programme

Session 1: Youth Aspirations



Guest of Honour and Panellist

Ms Grace Fu

Minister for Sustainability and the Environment

Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations

Ms Grace Fu graduated with a Bachelor of Accountancy (Honours), and subsequently obtained a Masters of Business Administration from the National University of Singapore. She began her career in 1985 with the Overseas Union Bank, and later with the Haw Par Group, in the areas of corporate planning, financial controls and business development.

In 2015, Ms Fu was appointed Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, and Leader of the House. She also chaired the National Integration Council, National Youth Council, and sat on the board of the People's Association. In July 2020, Ms Fu was appointed Minister for Sustainability and the Environment. In January 2024, Ms Fu concurrently assumed the responsibility as Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations.

Session 1: Youth Aspirations



Panellist

Ms Siti Khadijah Setyo RS

*Manager, Research & Design
Yayasan MENDAKI*

Ms Siti Khadijah Setyo RS is the Manager of the Research and Design Department at Yayasan MENDAKI. Her role involves conceptualising and managing research projects, analysing national policy trends and strengthening partnerships with MENDAKI's stakeholders. She also co-authored the Alternative Report on Singapore for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and attended the 81st UNCRC meeting in Geneva.

Khadijah holds a Master's degree in Public Policy from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore (NUS). Her academic journey was marked by rigorous coursework and a capstone project focused on "Effective Regulatory Ecosystem of School Education in India," reflecting her interest in policy analysis and its practical implications.

Session 1: Youth Aspirations



Panellist

Mr Hazeem Nasser

Founder,

The Signpost Project

Mr Hazeem Nasser is a post-graduate student pursuing his Master in Public Policy (MPP) and Master of Science (MSc) in Sociology at the University of Oxford on the Rhode Scholarship. He also holds a B.A. (Honours) from Yale-NUS College. He is the founder of two nonprofits: ALittleChange in 2016 which focuses on parent-child relationships in low-income families, and The Signpost Project (TSP) in 2019 which helps tissue peddlers in Singapore. He remains active in TSP, with TSP being a founding member of the Ministry of Social and Family Development's Vulnerable-in-Community Network. For his non-profit work, Hazeem has received The Diana Award and Community Cares Award. He is also the outgoing Impact Officer of the World Economic Forum Global Shapers Hub in Singapore.

Session 1: Youth Aspirations



Moderator

Mr Danial Hakim

*President,
MENDAKI Club*

Mr Danial Hakim has over 8 years of experience overseeing impact-driven projects related to youth empowerment, legal assistance, and uplifting the Malay/Muslim community. He is currently the President of MENDAKI Club, which runs career-centric and youth development programmes for youths, overseeing around 350 volunteers and impacting almost 3000 beneficiaries each year. Danial is also a board member of Yayasan MENDAKI, and concurrently holds leadership roles in other community organisations. In addition, he is a founding member of PEGUAM, a newly-formed organisation which provides legal awareness and guidance services to the public.

Danial has also been recognised as an awardee of the National Council for Social Services' 40-Under-40 (in 2022) and ZICO Advisory's ASEAN 40-Under-40 (in 2018) lists, for his contributions to the social and people sectors. Professionally, Danial is a trained lawyer-turned-policymaker, and currently works in the public sector.

Session 2: Youth Mental Well-Being



Panellist

Mr David Chua

*Chief Executive Officer,
National Youth Council*

Mr David Chua was appointed as the first Chief Executive Officer of the National Youth Council (NYC), an autonomous agency under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY). NYC oversees two key operational divisions - Outward Bound Singapore (OBS) and Youth Corps Singapore. NYC drives holistic youth development at the national level, in partnership with public and private sector agencies. It engages young Singaporeans, sends them overseas for growth and exposure, tracks youth trends and capacity builds youth sector organisations.

David is also the Chairman of the Board of Directors at *SCAPE, a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) under MCCY, that runs aspirational programmes for youth. Prior to joining NYC, David served for 22 years in the Singapore Armed Forces.

Session 2: Youth Mental Well-Being



Panellist

Ms Tasneem Abdul Majeed

*Mental Health Ambassador,
Beyond The Label*

Ms Tasneem Abdul Majeed is an NUS Psychology graduate and sibling caregiver with a keen passion for disability and youth mental health advocacy. In recent years, she has actively contributed to the community through various external events. She has partnered with several local organisations such as Rainbow Centre, CaringSG, SG Enable, and Caregiver's Alliance Limited (CAL); advocating for greater mental health support for families with special needs children, especially siblings. As an ambassador for mental wellness organisations such as Resilience Collective and Beyond the Label (BTL), Tasneem also aims to shatter the stigma surrounding mental health in Singapore.

Currently serving as a Special Education Needs (SEN) Officer under the Ministry of Education (MOE), Tasneem's future goal is to become a leader in disability advocacy. Her future plans include promoting greater community support for families of children with special needs, as well as proposing initiatives to enable better integration of special needs students into mainstream classrooms.

Session 2: Youth Mental Well-Being



Panellist

Dr Syed Harun Alhabsyi

*Consultant Psychiatrist and Medical Director,
The Starfish Clinic of Psychiatry & Mental Wellness*

Dr Syed Harun Alhabsyi is a Consultant Psychiatrist & Medical Director of The Starfish Clinic of Psychiatry & Mental Wellness. He is currently serving as a Nominated Member of Parliament, is the Honorary Secretary of the Singapore Psychiatric Association and is a member of Health Promotion Board's Mental Well-being Resource Panel. He is also a member of the Singapore Mental Well-Being Network; a national network that serves to improve community and peer support through broader citizen-based interventions, and to strengthen mental health literacy, wayfinding of resources and destigmatisation in mental health.

Dr Syed Harun also holds various community appointments, including as President of Lembaga Biasiswa Kenangan Maulud and Council Member of the National Youth Council. He is also a Visiting Consultant to the Institute of Mental Health & Woodlands Health, and remains a passionate advocate in ensuring access to mental healthcare in the community.

Session 2: Youth Mental Well-Being



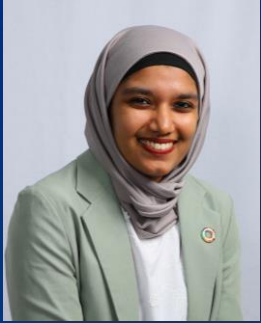
Moderator

Ms Iva Aminuddin

*Director, Learning and Development Office,
Civil Service College Singapore*

Ms Iva Aminuddin is a career public service learning and organisational change practitioner. She is currently the Director of the Learning and Development Office, Civil Service College Singapore (CSC). Her work is currently focused on uplifting L&D capabilities in response to the rapidly evolving external environmental context to meet future Public Service needs. Iva also has experiences in leadership development, organisational change and innovation; and Public Service Transformation both within the Singapore Public Service and via regional capability development projects funded by UNDP, World Bank and ADB for governments in ASEAN and South Asia. She was a pioneer in the development of role-play simulation and serious games capabilities in the Singapore Public Service and was identified as Agile 50: World's Most Influential People Revolutionising Government (Futuristic Minds) in 2021. She was a former executive committee member of MENDAKI Club and was actively involved in youth leadership development initiatives with MENDAKI Club as well as the Young Sikh Association (Singapore).

Fireside Chat: A Conversation with Youth



Host

Ms Attiya Ashraf Ali

*Vice-President,
MENDAKI Club*

Ms Attiya Ashraf Ali is the Vice-Chairperson of MENDAKI Club, a youth-led organisation that brings together our community of Malay/Muslim young professionals and students through programmes that enable personal and professional development. She mainly oversees the women's chapter, MGirl, the PEER Community Programme and the data operations of the organisation. Professionally, Attiya works at Ernst & Young as a consultant focusing on Sustainability and Social Impact. During her spare time, Attiya likes to unwind by running and spending time with family.

Fireside Chat: A Conversation with Youth



Host

Mr Zhin Sadali

*TV Presenter & Actor,
TheSmartLocal*

Mr Zhin Sadali is a TV presenter, actor and content creator. Since he began his journey as a YouTube talent for TheSmartLocal in 2018, Zhin has constantly worked in perfecting his craft both as a social media content creator and in front of the camera. Since then, he has embarked on multiple milestones, landing his first lead role in a drama in 2022, hosted Singapore's countdown in 2023 and is currently the host for MediaCorp Suria's weekly live talk show, Manja. His social media accounts features a more intimate setting, where he shares weekly recipes in a series called 'Bujang Things' which has since gained eyeballs from audiences in Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei. He uses his social media platform following to advocate for Mental Health Awareness, spreading kindness and a growing journey in his line of work.

MENDAKI SYMPOSIUM 2024

Key Factors Influencing Muslim Youth Aspiration Achievement

Siti Khadijah Bte Setyo R S

Manager, Research & Design, Yayasan MENDAKI

10 July 2024

ORGANISED BY:



IN SUPPORT OF:



Scope

1 Rationale

2 Objectives

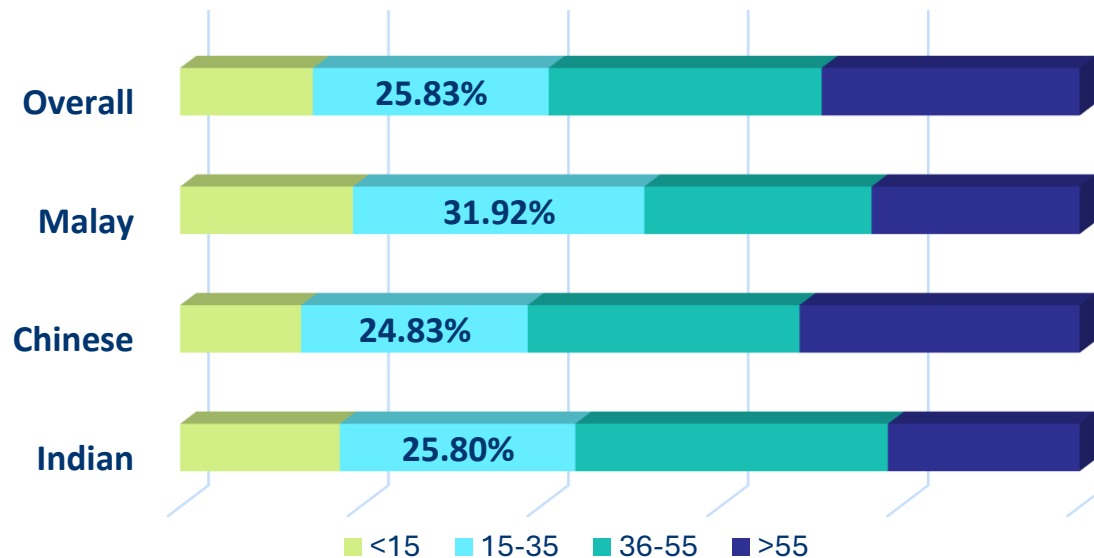
3 Approach

4 Key Findings

5 Summary

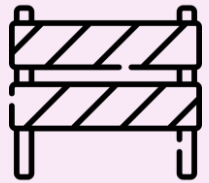
Rationale

Youth Population by Ethnic Group
(2020)



- More than 30% of Malay resident population aged 15-35 years old
- Assets to the community
- But many lack aspirations, unsure how to achieve their aspirations or lack confidence to pursue their aspirations
- Commissioned a study to better understand Muslim youth aspirations
- *How might we enable Muslim youth to achieve their academic and career aspirations?*

Objectives



To understand factors that help or hinder Muslim youth from achieving their academic and career aspirations



To explore interventions that MENDAKI and our partners can implement to better help Muslim youth achieve their academic and career aspirations

Approach

Phase 1: Qualitative Research

1-on-1 In-Depth Interview

Feb – Jun 2023



Sample size = 18

- To contextualise what Muslim youth's aspirations are & what their plans are to achieve their aspirations
- To understand the factors that influenced their aspirations and plans

Phase 2: Quantitative Research

Face-to-Face Survey

Sep 2023 – Apr 2024

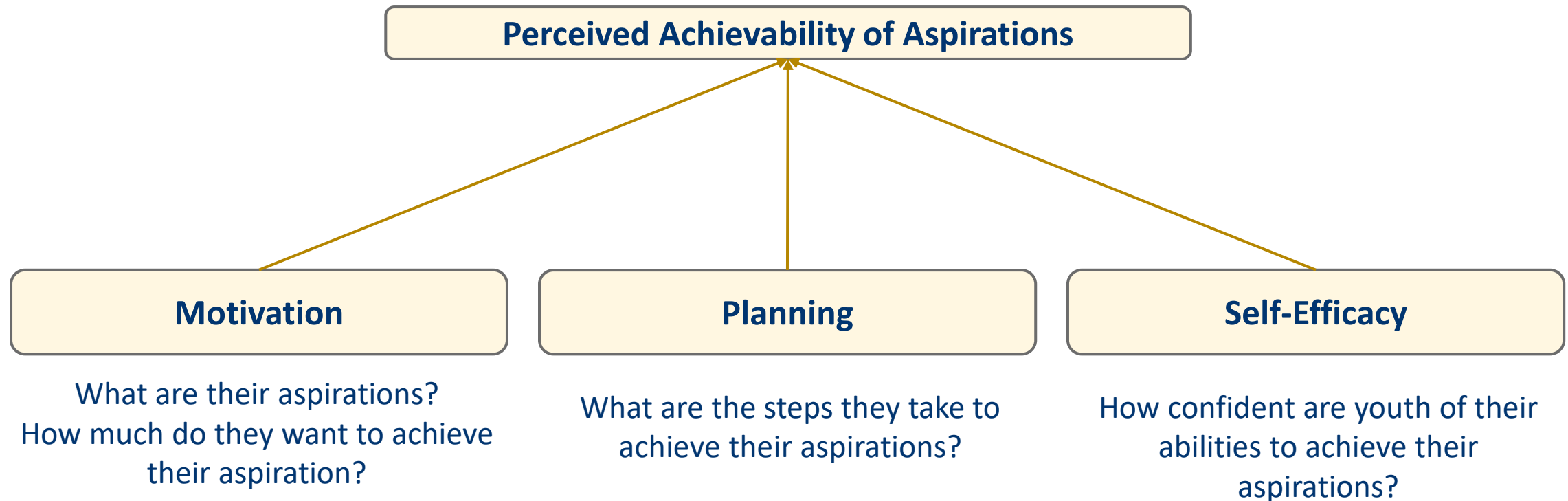


Sample size = 1,024

- To identify the opportunity areas that MENDAKI should prioritise

Factors Affecting Aspirations

Achievement of aspiration is influenced by one's motivation towards the aspiration, planning and self-efficacy



Framework adapted from: *How do adolescents see their future? A review of the development of future orientation and planning* (Nurmi, 1991)

Phase 1: Key Insights

What are Muslim youth's aspirations?

- Career and academic achievements are the gateway to realising familial & lifestyle aspirations.
- Important to identify the right career aspirations and the education pathway to achieve those aspirations.
- However, Muslim youth may not have adequate exposure and information to potential careers that might interest them.

Motivation

Motivation to pursue an aspiration wanes when:

- it is not aligned to their interests
- there is a lack of a plan
- they do not feel like they have the capabilities to achieve it.

Planning

Some Muslim youth do not have a plan, while others have a plan that does not always help them get to their aspiration.

Self-efficacy

Muslim youth's confidence in executing the plan is influenced by:

- their past achievements in something similar
- social support
- vicarious learning.

Phase 2: Face-to-Face Survey

We asked how important these aspirations were to Muslim youth

Academic Aspirations



To acquire new skills and knowledge outside of the formal education system

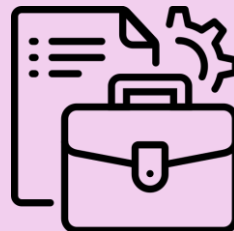


To attain higher educational qualifications

Career Aspirations



To have a successful career



To own my own business

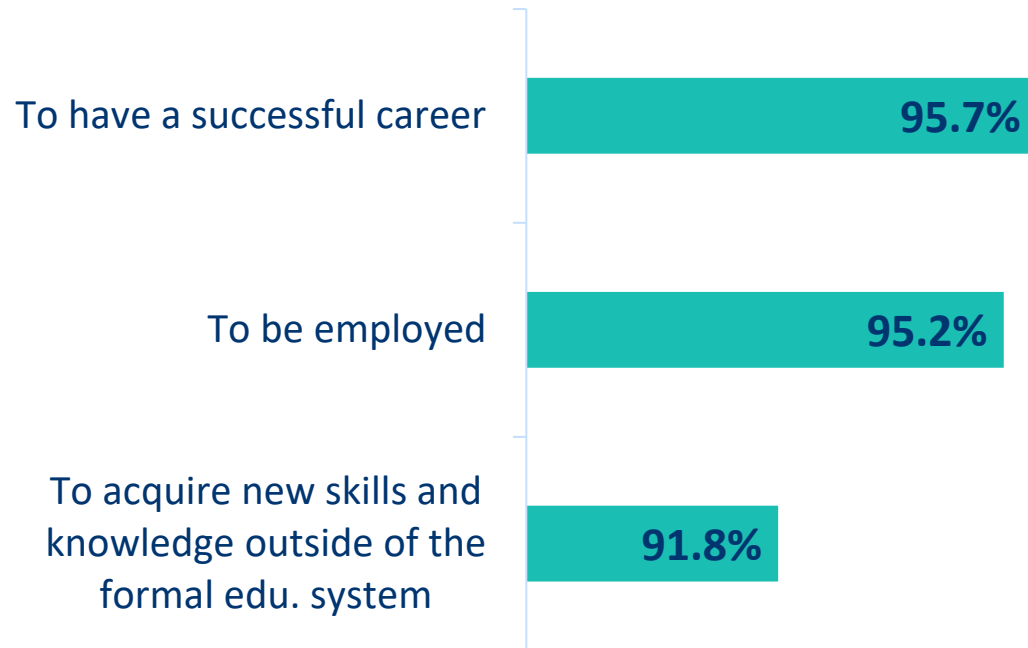


To be employed

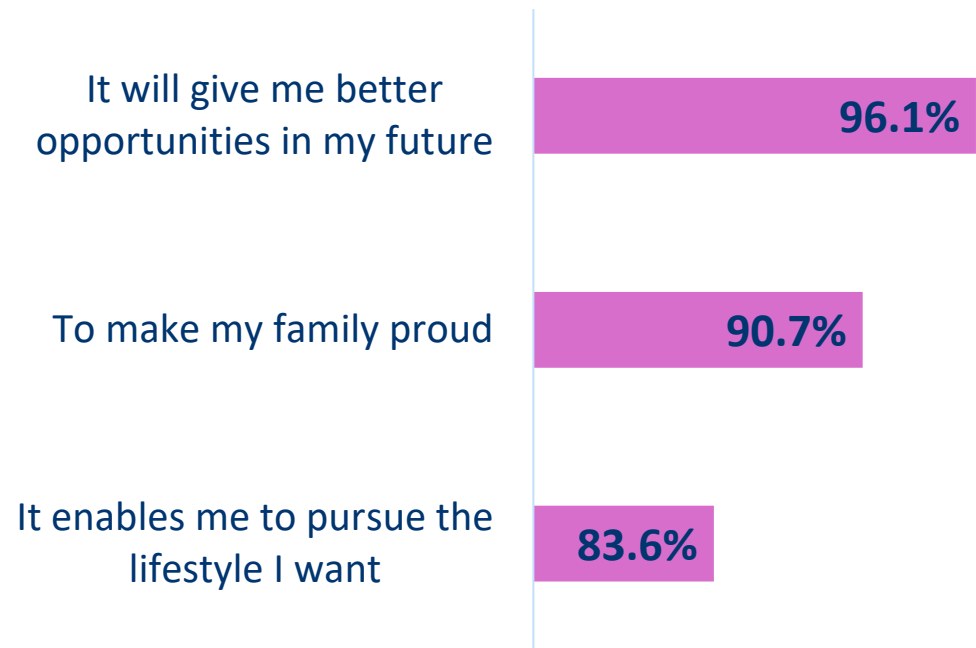
Phase 2: Face-to-Face Survey

We asked about the following academic and career aspirations

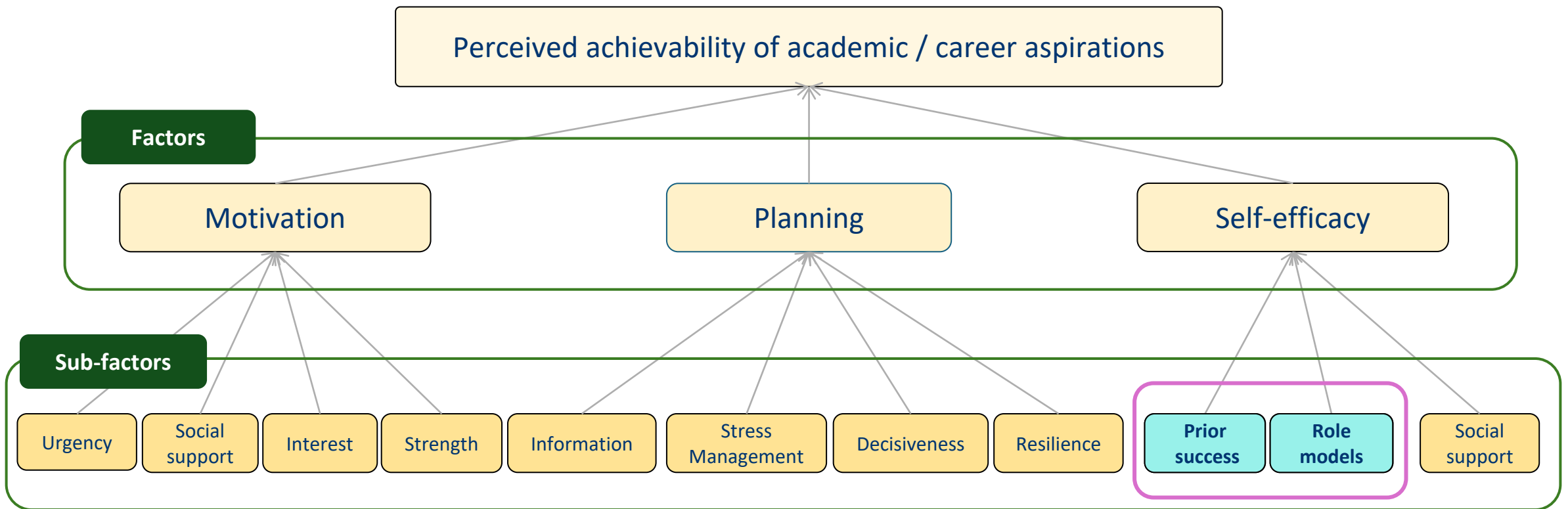
How important are these aspirations to Muslim youth?



What inspired Muslim youth to have these aspirations?



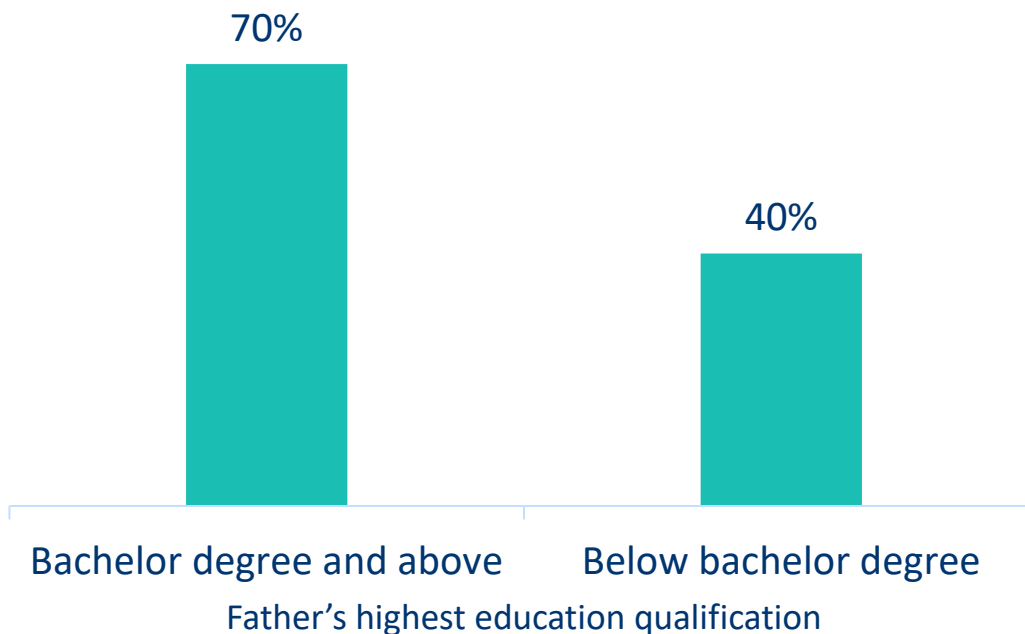
Sub-Factors Affecting Aspirations



Demographic factors controlled for in analysis

Role Models: Finding #1

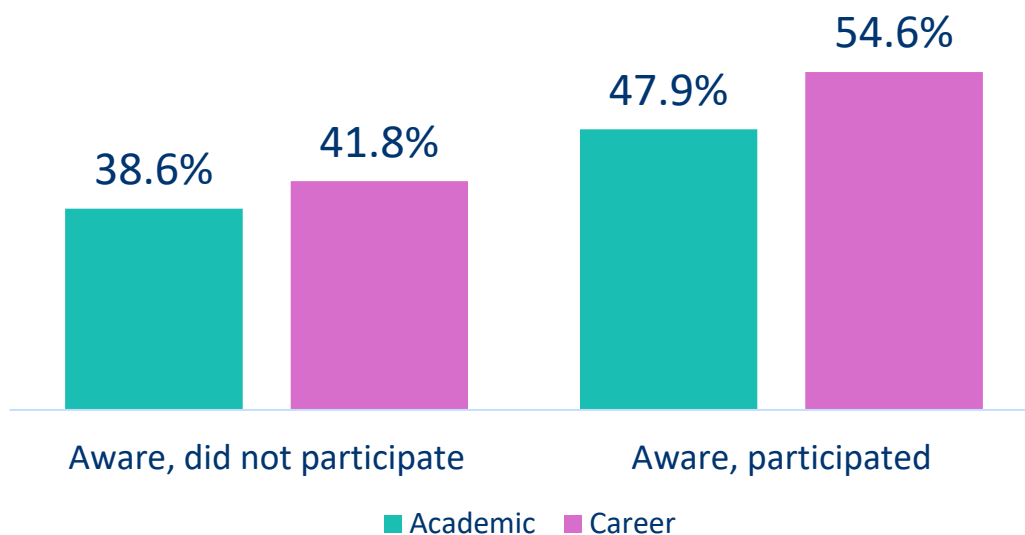
Do male Muslim youth have someone who inspires them?



- Muslim youth are inspired by academic achievers who resemble them
- Role models should be relatable i.e. someone like them
- Fathers with higher education qualifications more likely to be a source of inspiration to their sons

Role Models: Finding #2

Was there anyone who inspired youth's aspirations depending on their awareness and participation in mentorship?

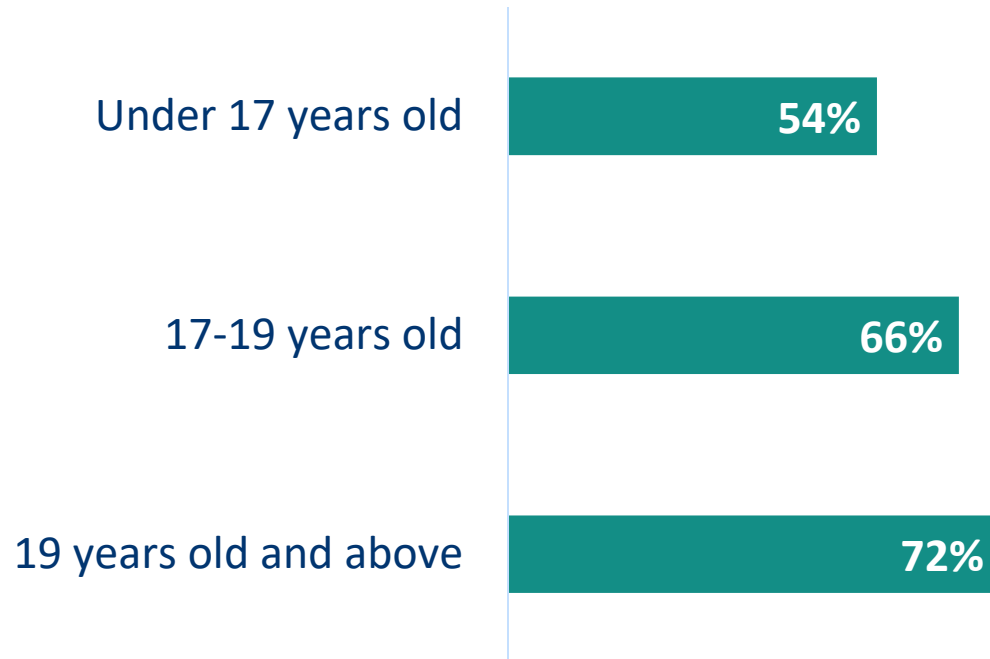


- **Mentoring makes a difference**

- Mentors are more likely to provide inspiration on possible career options, and not so much on academic pathways to get there
- This limits Muslim youth's ideas on what possible academic pathways might be suitable for them

Prior Success: Finding #1

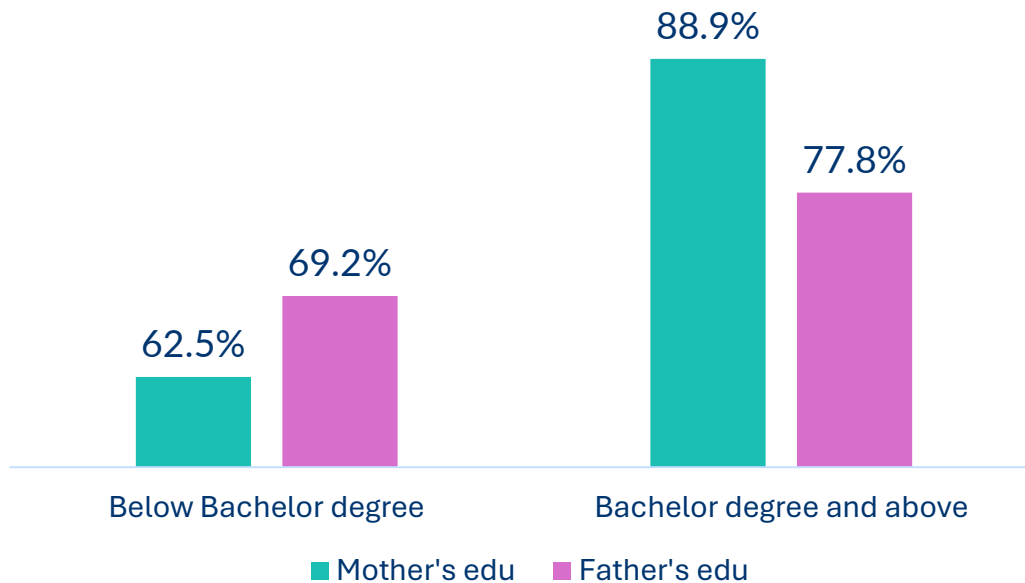
Have youth achieved high grades in the area of their academic aspirations?



- **Experiencing prior success allows youth to be more confident in achieving their academic aspirations**
- This can be in the form of commendation, praises, doing well in school tests
- Younger Muslim youth may not have had many opportunities to achieve prior success in their academic aspirations

Prior Success: Finding #2

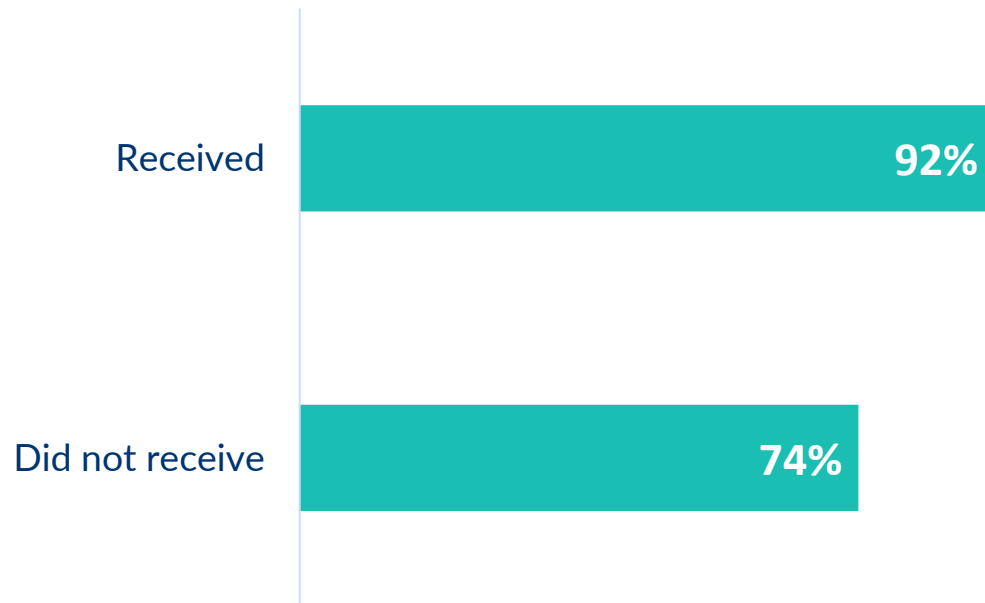
Have youth been commended in the area of academic aspirations, based on parents' education qualification?



- Praises help Muslim youth to identify and celebrate their academic successes
- Higher educated mothers are more likely to praise their children in their academic aspirations as compared to lower educated mothers
- More can be done to recognise the efforts of Muslim youth

Prior Success: Finding #3

Have youth overcome challenges in the area of career aspirations and whether they have received financial assistance?



- **Providing financial assistance to Muslim youth can help build resilience in youth.**
- Muslim youth who received MENDAKI study loans felt that they were more resilient when it comes to overcoming challenges in their career aspirations.

Summary

Importance of Role Models

- Muslim youth are inspired by academic achievers who resemble them
- Fathers may be a source of inspiration to their sons
- Mentoring makes a difference

Importance of Prior Success

- Experiencing prior success allows youth to be more confident in achieving their academic aspirations
- Praises help Muslim youth identify and celebrate their academic successes
- Providing financial assistance can help build resilience in youth